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THE EUROPEAN SECURITY AND DEFENSE IDENTITY

EXPLAINED:

WHY THE US SHOULD SUPPORT IT

by

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Preface

My interest in European defense stems from the three years I spent as an exchange officer to the German Air Force under the US Air Force's Personnel Exchange Program. While serving in the Luftwaffe, I gained an understanding of how German airmen view the United States. Looking at my country through their eyes was the most beneficial part of the exchange experience. With this paper, I have endeavored to stay abreast of the ongoing security developments in Europe which I experienced firsthand. This paper is dedicated to my comrades in Lufttransport Geschwader 61, Landsberg, Germany.

I would like to acknowledge the wonderful support my wife, Leslie, has given me throughout my Air Force career. Many thanks are also due to my advisor, Douglas Peifer, for his guidance and insight on this project.

Abstract

The European Security and Defense Identity (ESDI) is the European Union's (EU) effort to acquire a military instrument of power commensurate with its economic and political instruments of power. The US should support ESDI on the condition that it continues to evolve within the context of NATO. ESDI should result in stronger and more capable allies who will be better partners for the US in pursuit of shared interests and values. Any EU or NATO operation in the foreseeable future will rely on US capabilities. The US can leverage its technological strengths, as well as its mobility, aerial refueling, and reconnaissance capabilities to maintain its leadership role in Europe. By supporting ESDI, the US can shape its development in a manner that will be beneficial to both sides of the Atlantic. Failure to support ESDI risks further damaging an already strained relationship with Europe.

Chapter 1

Introduction to ESDI

The EU's great potential today is that it can rely on economic, humanitarian, and diplomatic tools. The recent experiences have also made it clear that there would be no credible European crisis management capability unless it were backed by a significant military force.

—Alain Richard, French Minister of Defense
February 2000

After years of incremental growth, the European Union's (EU) goal of acquiring a military capability recently sprung from quiet obscurity into the headlines on both sides of the Atlantic. In November 2000, European nations pledged over 100,000 soldiers to a multinational Rapid Reaction Force which will be led by and answerable to the EU. Decried as a "Euro Army" by some, this force is intended to give the EU a military capability which could be utilized for humanitarian and crisis management operations. The pledging conference set off alarm bells in Europe and North America because it signaled the intent of EU members to create an altogether new military allegiance. Although the multinational Rapid Reaction Force has received the most attention, it is only the most recent development of the emerging European Security and Defense Identity, known as ESDI.

At its core, ESDI is the means by which the EU intends to cultivate a military instrument of power commensurate with the economic and political instruments already at its disposal. After years of calling for Europe to shoulder more of the burden of defending Europe, American leaders find themselves faced with a Europe apparently bent on doing just that. Americans fear

ESDI could undermine NATO and lead to a loss of American influence in Europe. Post-Cold War Europe was beginning to question NATO's utility in the absence of the Soviet threat—until civil war engulfed the Balkans and only NATO had the capability to intervene. In 1998 Europe's two strongest military powers, Great Britain and France, uncharacteristically joined ranks in St. Malo to assert the EU required a military capability. The Kosovo crisis the following year was a watershed event for the Europeans because it revealed a huge disparity between America's combat power and that of the European allies. In the aftermath of Kosovo, European nations together resolved to improve their military capability to enable them to act without having to call on NATO, and by extension, the United States.

For the US, the issue of ESDI comes down to the future role of NATO. If the evolution of ESDI results in a European force which takes over the function of common defense for Europe, NATO will become redundant. If, on the other hand, ESDI results in a robust European capability with close ties to NATO, it could allow the US to shed some of its defense obligations in Europe. Although the Rapid Reaction Force being developed under ESDI is intended to deal with the low end of the spectrum of conflict—from humanitarian assistance to peacekeeping—its charter does leave open the eventual possibility of taking over common defense. In the foreseeable future, however, any EU force will be dependent on NATO capabilities and assets. NATO has the opportunity to work with the EU to insure transparency and to shape the development of ESDI. In the event ESDI develops outside the framework of NATO, and the US loses its leadership role as a European power, it could have huge ramifications, since the combined economic, political, and military resources of the EU would rival that of the United States, introducing a peer competitor on the world stage.¹

Although European governments recognize the need for a common foreign and security policy to complement their common trade and economic policies, they are finding it much more difficult to agree on security issues than on economic issues. The desire for an autonomous, robust force is also confronted with the reality of the cost of creating such a force. In the end, ESDI will probably result in a compromise all EU members can live with—most likely giving EU forces a well-defined, limited role.

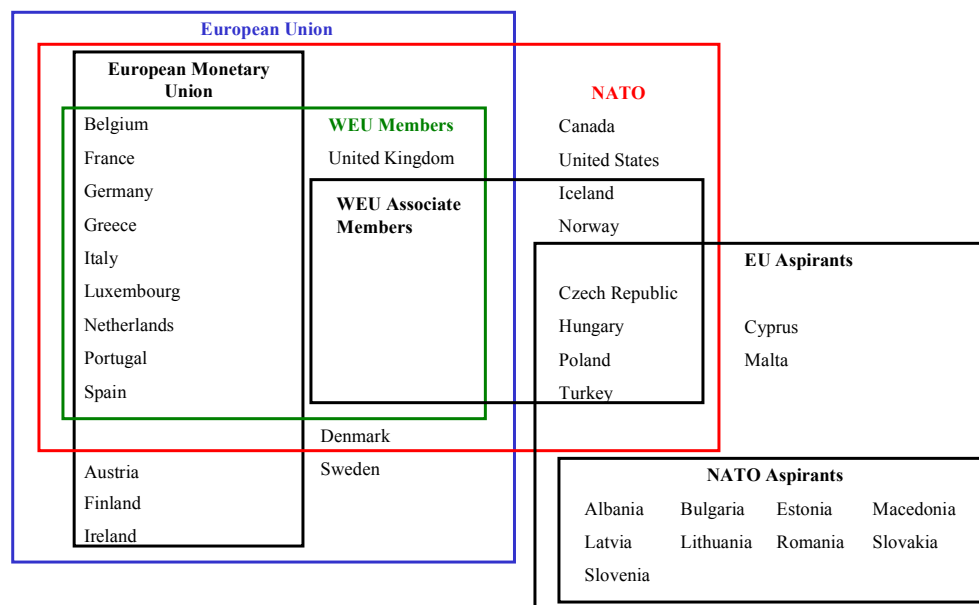


Figure 1 Membership in Significant European Organizations

The most confounding aspect of ESDI lies in defining military and political relationships between the EU and other European institutions. Figure 1 shows membership in major European institutions as of early 2001 and illustrates the potential for conflict between nations that are members of some, but not all, the major organizations. The core of Europe consists of nine nations who are members of the European Monetary Union (EMU), the EU, the Western European Union (WEU), and NATO. The UK, despite its lack of participation in the EMU, is a

major European power broker, and along with France and Germany, is among the key players in developing ESDI. Without the full support of these three nations, the EU cannot hope to achieve a credible military capability. Tensions are running high between nations that are members of NATO, but not the EU. These nations, including the United States, insist that ESDI develop within the context of NATO to insure congruence between NATO and EU interests. The primary source of conflict lies in French insistence that the newly formed RRF be completely independent of NATO.

Despite serious reservations about ESDI, the United States should support the EU in its efforts to develop a more robust military capability. A militarily strengthened Europe does not pose a threat to the US—on the contrary, it will allow the US to reduce its share of the cost of European defense. The US can maintain its leadership role in Europe by encouraging ESDI while leveraging costly military technologies which the Europeans do not currently possess, and will not be able to acquire for the foreseeable future. The US enjoys a substantial technological lead in stealth, precision weapons, and intelligence gathering, and maintains much greater strategic lift, aerial refueling and reconnaissance capabilities. While ESDI intends to address some of these shortfalls, the US lead is so large that in order for NATO (or the EU) to mount a large-scale combat operation, it will rely heavily on US capabilities and technologies for many, many years.

By supporting the development of ESDI within the context of NATO, the US can continue its policy of shaping the strategic environment in Europe. If, on the other hand, the US chooses to oppose ESDI, and the EU succeeds in developing its own military instrument of power, a new day will have dawned in Europe, where the US will find its influence greatly reduced. In order to maintain its status as a European power, the US must remain engaged in Europe. At this

juncture, the US has the opportunity to positively influence the development of ESDI to ensure it grows within the established framework of NATO, but this can only occur if the US is willing to politically support the EU in its efforts to develop a credible military capability.

Notes

¹ Peter van Ham, *Europe's New Defense Ambitions: Implications for NATO, the US, and Russia*, The Marshall Center Papers, No. 1 (Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany: George C. Marshall European Center For Security Studies, 2000), 21-22.

Chapter 2

Why ESDI, Why Now?

In Bosnia, in the early 1990s, because there was no European defense capability, because at that time the Americans did not wish to be involved, we had literally thousands of people slaughtered right on the doorstep of Europe.

—Tony Blair, British Prime Minister
February 2001

Europeans have been talking seriously about ESDI since the early 1990's, but have only made progress on the initiative in the past few years. There are three primary factors which have rekindled support for ESDI in the last three years. The first is the EU's emerging political and economic influence on the world stage and its lack of a corresponding military component. The second factor was dissatisfaction about Europe's inability to halt the Balkan civil wars. ESDI is meant to give the EU the ability to intervene in similar crises without having to resort to NATO. Finally, the third factor boosting support for ESDI is the currently strained relationship between Europe and the US. Several issues during the 1990's have prompted Europeans to question whether the Trans-Atlantic relationship should be redefined.

In the 1990's Europe's combined economy grew to surpass the United States'.¹ The end of the Cold War has meant national power is no longer measured primarily in terms of military strength, on the contrary, economic power has become the primary yardstick of national power. The EU, is a world economic power on par with the US, having diplomatic and economic instruments of power at its disposal. EU members collectively provide over half of all world

foreign and humanitarian aid,² yet it lacks a military instrument of power to enforce or credibly back up policy in the event diplomacy or economic sanctions fail. Certainly individual member nations have military power, but up to now, the decision for most EU members to use force has rested entirely within the context of NATO or the United Nations. Only the French and British governments, both nuclear powers, have the capability and the demonstrated willingness to deploy and sustain sizeable forces over great distances. As the Euro binds European economies ever tighter, many in Europe see a common foreign and defense policy for the EU as a natural continuation of European integration. The Europeans have acknowledged this will be a long, slow process, but they point out that it took ten years from the decision to implement a common currency to its actual appearance, and developing ESDI will require a similar timetable.³ Developing a military instrument of power to complement the existing diplomatic and economic instruments available to the EU will provide flexibility and options it does not currently possess.

The Balkan Crises

The primary factor in rekindling interest in ESDI after seven years of lukewarm support was European dissatisfaction with crisis management in the Balkans. As civil war erupted in Bosnia and Herzegovina in 1991, EU officials asserted that it was strictly a European problem, and the US administration agreed—it was not NATO’s responsibility. Jacques Poos, Chairman of the EU Council of Ministers, made his now-infamous “hour of Europe” speech, asserting “if one problem can be solved by the Europeans, it’s the Yugoslav problem. This is a European country and it’s not up to the Americans and not up to anybody else.”⁴ Several European nations deployed military units to Bosnia under United Nations auspices, but the lightly armed peacekeepers found themselves outgunned and occasionally taken hostage by Serb fighters. Europe reluctantly turned to NATO for a solution. In August 1995, Operation DELIBERATE

FORCE, a US-led air campaign to impose a cease-fire, was NATO's response. In December, NATO ground forces entered Bosnia in large numbers to enforce the Dayton Peace Accords.⁵ The Kosovo conflict, however, was the real turning point.

After months of failed negotiations between Serbs and Kosovars over autonomy for Kosovo, European governments again found themselves turning to NATO when diplomatic talks failed at Rambouillet. The objective was to coerce Serbian paramilitary forces to leave the province. NATO's Operation ALLIED FORCE brought the glaring disparity between European and American military capability to the surface. During the 78-day air campaign, the US military supplied the lion's share of intelligence, precision munitions, airlift, and tanker support for the allied effort. The extent of the disparity echoed around Europe, with defense experts pointing out that together the European members of NATO spend approximately 60% of what the US spends on defense, but have only 10% of America's military capability.⁶ Furthermore, despite having over 2 million soldiers in uniform in the EU, NATO's European members were barely able to muster 40,000 ground troops for duty in Kosovo.⁷ Kosovo was a watershed event for the Europeans. They saw firsthand that their ponderous militaries, still structured for the Cold War, were not ready to handle the kind of tasks they will likely be confronted with in the future.

American Issues

Several recent issues with the United States have strained relations with Europe. The collapse of the Soviet Union has left the United States the world's only superpower and European perceptions of US hegemony abound. Persistent rumors about the US military using Cold War intelligence gathering apparatus to conduct industrial espionage against European firms continue to generate European headlines.⁸ The pervasiveness of US culture and brand

name products throughout Europe trigger anti-American responses ranging to vandalism of McDonald's restaurants as symbolic attacks on the US. Many in Europe also consider the United States' posture on human rights hypocritical in light of the death penalty here. Further, the failure of the US Congress to ratify the Comprehensive Nuclear Test Ban Treaty, followed closely by American refusal to embrace the proposed permanent International Criminal Court was met with dismay and outrage in Europe. For not joining these international endeavors, the US is portrayed as a rogue superpower.

The issue of National Missile Defense (NMD) is also causing great consternation among our European allies. In addition to fears of igniting a ruinous arms race, Europeans fear that if the US were immune from missile attacks, it would decouple from Europe, leaving a partial vacuum. Developing an autonomous, capable European defense is one way of mitigating this perceived risk. In recent weeks, after discussions between Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld and NATO Secretary-General Robertson, the US assured its allies that it will help them develop their own missile defenses, and the European stance against NMD has softened somewhat.⁹ American enthusiasm for NMD, however, has done nothing to allay fears in Europe that America's focus is shifting away from Europe.

During the presidential campaign, candidate Bush spoke of the need to get US troops out of the Balkans as well as the need for the Europeans to start pulling their weight. In fact, the European nations contribute about 75% of the ground forces and have paid for 40% of the reconstruction of Bosnia-Herzegovina.¹⁰ US ambivalence to, or ignorance of, the contributions and sacrifices made by Europe serve only to widen the Atlantic gap. The Europeans fear an isolationist trend is taking place in the US, which could leave them alone, ill prepared, and unequipped to deal with a European crisis, if they do not bolster their military capability.

The latest public relations problem for the United States stems from allegations of cancer-causing munitions used by NATO during the Kosovo Conflict. Despite scientific evidence that dust from depleted uranium ordnance is not a health threat, NATO had to go on a public relations defensive in response to a massive outcry in Europe. As the provider of the depleted uranium shells, the US was directly implicated. Although an EU panel assigned to investigate the issue concluded in March 2001 that depleted uranium munitions did not cause the health problems claimed by some European soldiers, this report did not receive the same level of attention as the initial sensational claims.¹¹ Since the end of the Cold War, the US has been perceived as advancing its own interests to the detriment of the Allies, despite ongoing efforts to engage and reassure them. Recent developments in the US and Europe have stimulated support for ESDI as a means to counter American hegemony.

Tradeoff: ESDI for NMD

When newly appointed US Secretary of Defense Rumsfeld addressed European leaders in Munich in February 2001 he told them, “The United States intends to develop and deploy a missile defense.”¹² This came as no surprise—development of such a system was one of the platforms of the Bush campaign. What was surprising was the lack of European reaction to NMD considering the hype it received in Europe during the campaign. What transpired at the Munich Conference amounted to a tradeoff, summarized by Senator Joseph Lieberman, “We Americans seem to be saying that we’re going to do missile defense and it will be good for you Europeans, and you Europeans seem to be saying, ‘We’re going to have an EU force and it will be good for you Americans.’”¹³ In follow-up discussions in March, Secretary Rumsfeld met with European leaders to reassure them of America’s commitment to Europe, offering to help the Europeans develop a missile defense system which would be incorporated into NATO’s strategic

concept.¹⁴ Both sides are intent on developing their defense projects—ESDI for the Europeans and NMD for the Americans—and have adopted a wait-and-see attitude. Both sides are of the opinion that at best, the other is several years from actually developing the desired capability and seem to have agreed on an unspoken *quid pro quo* in terms of limiting criticism of each other.

Notes

¹ Department of Defense, *Allied Contributions to the Common Defense: A Report to the United States Congress by the Secretary of Defense, March 2000* (Washington, D.C.), Table E-1, available from http://www.defenselink.mil/pubs/allied_contrib2000/E-1.html.

² “The Council of the European Union and the common foreign and security policy,” *Europa*, 10; on-line, Internet, 19 January 2001, available from <http://ue.eu.int/pesc/pres.asp?lang=en>.

³ Alain Richard, French Minister of Defense, address to the Center for German and European Studies, Washington, D.C., 23 February 2000.

⁴ David S. Yost, *NATO Transformed* (Washington D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1998) 193.

⁵ *Ibid.*, 195.

⁶ Rt. Hon. Chris Patten, CH, Member of the European Commission responsible for External Relations, address to the Joint meeting European Parliament Foreign Affairs Committee with Members of the NATO Parliamentary Assembly, Brussels, Belgium, 22 February 2000; on-line, Internet, 19 October 2000, available from http://europa.eu.int/comm/external_relations/news/patten/speech_00_51.htm.

⁷ Peter van Ham, *Europe's New Defense Ambitions: Implications for NATO, the US, and Russia*, The Marshall Center Papers, No. 1 (Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany: George C. Marshall European Center For Security Studies, 2000), 18.

⁸ Joseph Fitchett, “French Start Industrial Spy Probe of U.S. Network,” *International Herald Tribune*, 5 July 2000.

⁹ John Vinocur, “France Shifts to Softer Stance as US Plans Its Missile Shield,” *International Herald Tribune*, 10-11 March 2001.

¹⁰ “The Council of the European Union and the common foreign and security policy,” *Europa*, 10; on-line, Internet, 19 January 2001, available from <http://ue.eu.int/pesc/pres.asp?lang=en>.

¹¹ Matthew Kaminski, “EU Panel Eliminates Uranium As Cause of Soldiers’ Illness,” *Wall Street Journal*, 7 March 2001.

¹² Secretary of Defense Donald H. Rumsfeld, address to the Munich Conference on European Security Policy, 3 February 2001, available from <http://www.defenselink.mil/cgi-bin/dlprint.cgi>.

¹³ Joseph Fitchett, “US and EU Ponder Defense Tradeoff,” *International Herald Tribune*, 8 February 2001.

¹⁴ John Vinocur, “France Shifts to Softer Stance as US Plans Its Missile Shield,” *International Herald Tribune*, 10-11 March 2001.

Chapter 3

History of European Defense Cooperation

The purpose of NATO is to keep the Americans in, the Russians out, and the Germans down.

—Lord Ismay, Secretary-General of NATO (1952-1957)

The idea of a common European defense is not new—it had its origins in the aftermath of World War II. Western Europe’s first attempt at a post-war military alliance was the creation of the Western European Union (WEU), founded in 1948. The original members were Britain, France, Belgium, Luxembourg and the Netherlands,¹ but the WEU was eclipsed the following year by the establishment of NATO—formed in response to a growing fear of Soviet expansionism. Alliance members bound their fates together by committing themselves to the principle of “common defense.” Article V of the North Atlantic Treaty states that “an armed attack on one or more of [the member nations] in Europe or North America shall be considered an attack against all of them.”²

Following the founding of NATO and the establishment of the Federal Republic of Germany in 1949, the United States pressed for the reestablishment of a West German army, primarily to draw on the large German population to augment US forces stationed there. In response, French Prime Minister René Pleven called for the creation of a European Defense Community (EDC) which would unite French and West German forces under a single European command. Konrad Adenauer, West Germany’s Chancellor, viewed the EDC as a vehicle for the reintegration of his

country into the affairs of Europe, and became an ardent supporter of the Pleven Plan.³ In the end, France rejected the plan because it chafed at the thought that French troops might serve under foreign commanders—especially Germans—so soon after World War II. Nevertheless, 1955 saw the accession of West Germany into NATO and the establishment of the German armed forces, albeit without a general staff and a maximum strength of 500,000 soldiers.⁴

At the same time military alliances were debated, European nations saw the need to cooperate economically. Today's EU traces its roots to 1952 when the European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) was established to integrate these industries in Germany, France, Italy, Belgium, Luxembourg and the Netherlands. Germany's participation in the ECSC marked the beginning of Franco-German rapprochement. In 1957 the European Economic Community was created to facilitate broader trade relationships, and in 1967 that body was merged with the ECSC to create the European Community. The 1991 Treaty of European Union, better known as the Maastricht Treaty, transformed the European Community—an economic institution, into the European Union—a political institution.⁵

Maastricht formally created a blueprint for a more politically and economically integrated Europe and laid the groundwork for the EMU. The Treaty is significant for transforming Western Europe from trade bloc into a single political entity. It also revived the long-dormant WEU, establishing formal relations between the WEU and the EU in order to address the possibility of the EU acquiring a military capability at some point in the future. In the intervening years, the EU has evolved into an important political unit with diplomatic, economic, legislative, and some judicial authority.

In 1992, WEU Foreign and Defense Ministers met in Petersberg, Germany to consider the defense implications of Maastricht. They agreed to “make available military units ... for tasks

conducted under the authority of the WEU” for certain low-intensity missions, which became known as “Petersberg tasks.” These missions included humanitarian and rescue missions, peacekeeping, and crisis management.⁶

To support the Maastricht Treaty’s call for an increased European defense profile, in 1993 WEU members began designating forces that would be primarily answerable to the WEU. The best known of these forces, the EUROCORPS, evolved from a French and a German armored division to its present strength of 60,000 troops, consisting of four divisions from Belgium, France, Spain and Germany with a Corps headquarters in Strasbourg, France. Seven other multinational forces have been identified as answerable to the WEU, including airborne brigades, amphibious brigades, a maritime force and a rapid deployment force. It is important to note that the WEU does not have command authority over any forces, nor does it have a permanent command structure. Forces answerable to the WEU are made available on a case-by-case basis by contributing nations.⁷

In the wake of the EU’s inability to prevent the disintegration of Yugoslavia, the EU amended the Maastricht Treaty with the Amsterdam Treaty in 1997.⁸ Amsterdam was intended to reconcile the “overly ambitious objectives of the common foreign and security policy and the means available to the Union for achieving those objectives.”⁹ Under the amended treaty, two proposals significantly changed the face of the emerging common security policy. First, the treaty broadened the scope of Maastricht by deleting the clause referring to *an eventual role* in common defense for the EU. Second, the treaty addressed the possibility of integrating the WEU into the EU.¹⁰ This was the first time the EU asserted for itself a role in the common defense of Europe, a role which previously had been the exclusive purview of NATO.

St. Malo: The British Turnabout

Nevertheless, even after Amsterdam, there had been no significant steps taken since 1991 when the EU first called for the establishment of a common foreign and security policy. That changed in 1998 when British Prime Minister Blair reversed the UK's long-standing policy of opposing European military integration. Until then, the development of a common foreign and security policy had been based on three unspoken principles. First, it would be developed within the context of NATO. Second, the WEU would be the vehicle of European defense cooperation, and finally, the EU would not have a role in European defense.¹¹ The historic St. Malo Declaration between France and Britain in 1998 upended these principles. Prime Minister Blair had become increasingly frustrated with Europe's inability and unwillingness to respond to crises in the Balkans and believed that Europe needed to rapidly develop a credible military capability in order to act outside the aegis of NATO. Blair was also chafing from the British Parliament's repudiation of the Euro, which he had supported, and saw defense as an avenue for his government to remain engaged in EU matters.¹² Explaining the British government's turnabout, the Prime Minister said, "If we don't get involved in European defense, it will happen without Britain."¹³ The St. Malo Declaration signed by Blair and French Prime Minister Jacques Chirac stated: "The European Union needs to be in a position to play its full role on the international stage ... To this end, the Union must have the capacity for autonomous action, backed up by credible military forces, the means to decide to use them and a readiness to do so." The Declaration called for the European Union to have the ability to take military action where NATO as a whole was not engaged.¹⁴ At St. Malo, the nations with the two most capable military forces in Europe put their weight behind the EU, asserting it must have a military capability.

Evolution of ESDI

The term ESDI had its genesis at the 1994 NATO summit in Brussels when NATO nations agreed that a strengthened European pillar of the Atlantic alliance would “enable the European allies to take greater responsibility for their common security and defense while reinforcing the transatlantic link.”¹⁵ A NATO ministerial meeting in 1996 resulted in two important decisions regarding ESDI. The first was a commitment to develop ESDI within the NATO Alliance, and the second was to make NATO assets and capabilities available for WEU-led operations.¹⁶ At the NATO Summit in Washington in 1999, Alliance Heads of State and Government reaffirmed their support for ESDI and set in motion a series of discussions to address participation of non-EU European Allies, as well as the means by which NATO, the WEU and the EU would collaborate. Another development of the Washington Summit was agreement upon the Defense Capabilities Initiative (DCI), a commitment to reduce the disparity in combat capability between the United States and the other Allies which was being underscored by the Kosovo campaign.¹⁷ The DCI amounted to a promise by the Europeans to increase defense spending, thereby benefiting NATO and furthering their aspirations of developing an autonomous, credible military capability. The Summit in Washington was hailed as a huge success, followed a month later by Slobodan Milosovic’s capitulation in Kosovo.

After the Washington Summit, the pace of European defense cooperation quickened. In December 1999 the European Union established what became known as the Common European Headline Goal: the capability to deploy a rapid reaction force of 50,000-60,000 troops for crisis management within 60 days and sustain them for up to one year. The force could be deployed “in and around Europe,” with the goal of having this capability in place by 2003.¹⁸

In February 2000, Secretary of Defense Cohen, speaking to European defense ministers in Munich, excoriated the Europeans for their lack of progress on the DCI. He reaffirmed American support for ESDI, but gave three preconditions, which he called the three “I’s.” He said ESDI must be Indivisible—that is, closely linked to NATO; Improvement—enhanced capability for the Alliance; and Inclusive—non-EU members of NATO must have access to planning and preparations. Cohen went on to question the rationale for cuts in the defense budgets of several European nations after they had agreed in Washington on the need to improve capability. He asked, “where are the resources to match the rhetoric?”¹⁹ A year later, his question is still valid.

Nevertheless, European defense aspirations gained momentum in November 2000, when EU defense ministers met in Brussels to pledge specific military units to the Rapid Reaction Force. Over 100,000 troops, 400 aircraft, and 100 ships were allocated, providing a reserve pool necessary to support the Headline Goal of deploying up to 60,000 soldiers. The troop commitments have been hailed as a milestone for the EU, however, manpower is not a problem in Europe—there are over two million troops under arms in the EU.²⁰ The real challenge for this force, notwithstanding unresolved political issues, will be procuring the resources necessary to create an interoperable logistics, mobility, and command and control infrastructure necessary to effectively employ a large multinational force. During Operation ALLIED FORCE, it was the US military that provided the bulk of these services.

Notes

¹ David S. Yost, *NATO Transformed* (Washington D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press, 1998) 77.

² Ibid, 304.

³ Timothy D. Showers, “France, Germany, and the Development of a European Security and Defense Identity” (master’s thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, 2000), 14.

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⁴ “Der Aufbau der Bundeswehr,” *Bundeswehr*, 12 March 2001, 2; on-line, Internet, available from <http://www.bundeswehr.de/bundeswehr/geschichte/aufbau.html>.

⁵ “The ABC of the European Union,” *European Union*, 31 October 2000, n.p.; on-line, Internet, available from <http://europa.eu.int/abc~en.htm>

⁶ “From the Maastricht to the Brussels Declarations,” *Western European Union*, 16 January 2001, n.p.; on-line, Internet, available from <http://www.weu.int/eng/info/maastricht.htm>.

⁷ “Multinational Forces Answerable to WEU,” *Western European Union*, 31 October 2000, n.p.; on-line, Internet, available from <http://www.weu.int/eng/info/faweu.htm>.

⁸ “The Council of the European Union and the common foreign and security policy,” *Welcome to the CFSP site*, 10 January 2001, 10; on-line, Internet, available from <http://ue.eu.int/pesc/pres.asp?lang=eng>.

⁹ “The Amsterdam Treaty: a Comprehensive Guide,” *Europa*, 19 January 2001, 5; on-line, Internet, available from <http://europa.eu.int/scadplus/leg/en/lvb/a19000.htm>.

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Margarita Mathiopoulos and Istvan Gyarmati, “Saint Malo and Beyond: Toward European Defense,” *Washington Quarterly* 22, no. 4 (Autumn 1999): 65-77.

¹² Kevin K. Hanson, “British Policies Regarding the European Union’s Emerging Defense Dimension” (master’s thesis, Naval Postgraduate School, 2000), 42.

¹³ Joe Murphy, “US Launches Attack on Euro Army,” *London Daily Telegraph*, 19 March 2001.

¹⁴ Franco-British Summit: Joint Declaration on European Defense, Saint Malo, France, 4 December 1998.

¹⁵ “Development of the European Security and Defence Identity within NATO,” *NATO Fact Sheets*, 18 October 2000, n.p.; on-line, Internet, available from <http://www.isn-lase.ethz.ch/cgi-bin/crist>.

¹⁶ “European Integration and European Security,” *Bundeswehr*, 24 October 2000, n.p.; on-line, Internet, available from http://www.bundeswehr.de/news/english/1_5europeanintegration.html.

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Chapter 4

NATO and ESDI

If you don't want to call it a European army, don't call it a European army. You can call it Margaret. You can call it Mary-Ann.

—Romano Prodi, European Commission President
November 2000

NATO has been supportive of the development of ESDI from the beginning. When Europe embarked on a program to define a common security and foreign policy, NATO began consulting with the WEU, establishing formal ties in 1996. The focus of the Alliance's defense cooperation began to shift from the WEU to the EU when the Europeans decided in 1998 to give the EU itself a credible defense capability.¹

Following NATO's public embracing of ESDI at the Washington Summit in 1999, EU-NATO working groups began meeting regularly in July 2000. The working groups are establishing procedures to allow NATO to support the EU in crisis management, including access to NATO hardware as well as planning and command and control capabilities. NATO also provided technical advice on the composition of the Rapid Reaction Force. NATO is committed to developing permanent arrangements for consultation with the EU, stressing the need for transparency between the two organizations.² In the end, NATO views ESDI as a means to strengthen the European pillar of the Alliance by developing "separable, but not

separate” capabilities which could respond to European requirements while at the same time contributing to Alliance security.³

In an interview with a prominent German newspaper, when asked why NATO is helping cultivate a future competitor in the EU, Lord Robertson, Secretary-General of NATO, gave three reasons. First, he asserted that although it will take time for the EU to develop a common foreign and security policy with the military capability to underpin it, the momentum in that direction is irreversible. NATO wishes to have a voice in the development of ESDI, and is therefore a willing participant in the process. Second, he maintains that 10 years after the end of the Cold War, it is increasingly difficult to justify why a Europe which is America’s economic equal is not capable of managing regional conflicts on its own doorstep. A robust ESDI should rectify this shortcoming. Finally, Lord Robertson maintains that in the future, there could conceivably be issues of strategic importance to Europe, which are not important interests of the United States. In these instances, he believes, Europe must be able to take the lead. He also stressed that NATO would maintain responsibility for collective defense, and that there will be no unnecessary duplication between NATO and the EU.⁴

The Controversy

Soon after the Brussels pledging conference for the Rapid Reaction Force in November 2000, a firestorm of controversy erupted on both sides of the Atlantic. Headlines shrieked about the creation of a Euro-Army to replace NATO. France, meanwhile, had been raising hackles by asserting that the planning staff for the Rapid Reaction Force should be independent of NATO, something the British and Americans vehemently opposed.⁵ These disputed issues were to be resolved at the EU’s biannual summit in Nice in early December 2000.

One week prior to the EU summit, Secretary of Defense Cohen, speaking at a NATO Ministerial Meeting, warned that NATO could become “a relic” unless the Europeans maintained their commitment to develop ESDI within the framework of NATO.⁶ His remarks were particularly directed at the French government’s plans for an independent planning cell for the Rapid Reaction Force. Cohen’s warning was downplayed by French Defense Minister Alain Richard who said he did not view Cohen’s statement as a warning, nor did he believe Cohen was repudiating US support for ESDI. Instead he pointed out that the French “certainly have a different view” that planning must be done through NATO.⁷ Cohen’s “Relic Speech” received much attention in the European press, and raised expectations that key concerns about ESDI would be resolved at Nice.

The Nice Summit did not live up to the high expectations placed on it. It was to be the grand finale of the French presidency of the EU, which rotates on a biannual basis, but talks nearly broke down over a dispute between France and Germany over representative voting.⁸ Going into the Summit, French President Chirac rebuffed US and British calls for integration of the Rapid Reaction Force into NATO, saying “European defense must naturally be coordinated with the [Atlantic] Alliance, but as far as its planning and implementation is concerned, it must be independent. Coordinated, but independent.”⁹ This was a far cry from the original statements about developing ESDI within the framework of NATO. In the end, France found itself alone on European defense at the Summit. The final draft of the Treaty of Nice included a statement that the EU defense policy shall “be compatible with NATO.”¹⁰ This allowed British Prime Minister Tony Blair to claim a diplomatic victory at home, as he was reportedly instrumental in persuading the Chirac to back down. It was the guarantee that Secretary Cohen had sought, but the matter didn’t end there.

When NATO ministers met in Brussels a week later to discuss Rapid Reaction Force access to NATO assets and planning capabilities, the French minister again insisted the EU force should be independent. The French were accused of creating an “atmosphere of distrust.” There were even reports that the relationship between NATO and the EU, cultivated over the previous five months, was “close to collapse.”¹¹ Lord Robertson followed up with a statement outlining NATO’s position on the Rapid Reaction Force, which he described as “a NATO-friendly rapid reaction force that would be used in very limited circumstances where the Alliance as a whole is not engaged.”¹² NATO and the EU seemed to be speaking past each other, with NATO ignoring the Amsterdam and Nice Treaties’ statements that the EU will progressively frame a defense policy which might evolve to encompass common defense, and the EU seeming to ignore the fact that most NATO members want ESDI to develop within the framework of NATO, an idea affirmed by the same treaties.

Another indication of the fragility of the NATO-EU relationship had already become apparent in November 2000 at the pledging conference for the European Rapid Reaction Force. Turkey, an aspiring EU member, conditionally offered substantial forces, including a 5,000-man mechanized brigade, 36 F-16s, and two transport aircraft. The Turkish defense minister stated “These are the forces we can provide if an effective role and responsibility is given to Turkey.”¹³ Turkey was indicating its concern that it could be marginalized by the EU, especially since Greece, Turkey’s rival, is an EU member. This set the stage for a showdown between Turkey and the rest of the NATO allies.

During the latest round of EU-NATO discussions, held in January 2001, Turkey caused a stalemate when it cast the lone veto on a measure allowing the EU force to use NATO planning capabilities. The decision to grant the EU access to NATO assets must be unanimous. Turkey

resents the fact that it has been a NATO pillar in Europe for 50 years, and has been pressing for EU membership for several years, but the EU has continually rebuffed its efforts. Turkey insists that it be given a voice in any EU operations in its sphere, including the Balkans and the Eastern Mediterranean. The EU counters that they cannot allow non-EU members a seat on their military council as it would threaten the political legitimacy of the new defense role. Turkey's veto has placed it in opposition to the other 18 NATO members, including the United States, who was leading the call for EU access to NATO assets for two fundamental reasons. First, collaboration in planning will ensure transparency for EU operations. Second, using NATO planners would obviate the need for the EU to develop its own large military staff, which could someday rival NATO.¹⁴ The stalemate illustrates the difficulty in reaching consensus within NATO on whether or not to support ESDI.

Notes

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⁴ Lord Robertson of Port Ellen, "Who's Afraid of ESDI?" *Frankfurter Allgemeine Zeitung*, 5 December 2000.

⁵ Ambrose Evans-Pritchard and Michael Smith, "EU Force 'Will be Independent from Nato,'" *London Daily Telegraph*, 1 December 2000.

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⁷ Ibid.

⁸ Germany, with the largest population in Europe, was pushing for a procedure based on demographics, but the small and medium-sized nations opposed the idea.

⁹ Keith B. Richburg, "EU Leaders Meet: Police Battle Protesters," *Washington Post*, 8 December 2000.

¹⁰ European Union, *Treaty of Nice*, SN 533/1/00 REV 1 (provisional text approved by the Intergovernmental Conference on institutional reform), 22 December 2000.

¹¹ Michael Evans, "France Opens New Battle Over EU Army," *London Times*, 14 December 2000.

¹² Philip Webster, "Robertson Fires Warning Shot At French On NATO," *London Times*, 27 December 2000.

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¹³ Michael R. Gordon, "Turkey Offers Troops for New European Force, With a Proviso," *New York Times*, 22 November 2000.

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Chapter 5

Why the US should support ESDI

As in so many things in life, the devil is in the detail. And the details haven't been worked out.

—Donald Rumsfeld, Secretary of Defense
March 2001

The key elements of United States' security strategy are to *shape* the international environment in ways favorable to the US, to *respond* to the full spectrum of crises, and to *prepare* for an uncertain future. With respect to Europe, the means for attaining this strategy has been over 50 years of engagement. The United States has a unique opportunity to capitalize on this history of engagement to positively influence the development of ESDI, benefiting the nation by reducing defense costs in Europe without losing influence.

In the final analysis, ESDI is not designed to undermine NATO, in fact, the ostensible purpose behind the EU's push for an autonomous military capability is to “strengthen the European pillar.” The EU members have decided the risk of undermining NATO is smaller than the risk of maintaining the *status quo* in Europe.¹ Most European leaders have committed themselves to building ESDI within the context of NATO. Each time the French government voices its opposition to close ties between NATO and the EU, the rest of the European NATO members rush to reaffirm their countries' commitment to NATO. Although Europe's plan for an autonomous, capable military force faces many obstacles, it has a reasonable prospect for success.

Duplicating, Decoupling, and Discriminating

Criticism of ESDI is often enumerated in a phrase coined by Secretary of State Madeline Albright, known as the “three D’s:” duplicating, decoupling, and discriminating. Opponents of ESDI maintain that creating new EU military structures and forces duplicates NATO’s existing capabilities, resulting in a net loss, by diluting scarce defense funds. It is for precisely this reason that ESDI cannot afford to be redundant. No European nation can afford a it. Forces from NATO countries that are designated available to the EU will be “dual hatted,” that is, available to both NATO and the EU. This is the heart of reason NATO insists that EU military planning be done in close concert with NATO. Fear of duplication is exaggerated, given that the Treaties of Maastricht, Amsterdam, and Nice have all affirmed that ESDI shall evolve within the context of NATO. France, alone, has pressed for more independence for the EU force, but they have been rebuffed at every turn. France, although a NATO member, does not participate in NATO’s integrated command structure, so it has the least stake in the existing NATO planning apparatus. Sir Charles Guthrie, Britain’s Chief of Defence Staff, tiring of French insistence about an independent role for EU forces said recently, “France certainly has a different view. ... We believe the Rapid Reaction Force is there to support and strengthen NATO, and if it doesn’t do that we are not so interested.”² ESDI is currently deadlocked over this issue, and until France relents, ESDI will go no further, because none of the other participants can afford or want duplication.

ESDI is also criticized as an EU-sponsored attempt to decouple the US from Europe. According to the argument, the fall of the Iron Curtain has made Europe less dependent on American protection. While this may be partly true, most Europeans value the stabilizing influence the US has had in the past, and continues to maintain today. There is no question in

that NATO remains a vital part of the European security architecture, and the US, like it or not, provides the glue that binds NATO together. It is worth noting that the US pays 25% of the NATO common-funded budget, which totals \$1.1 billion.³ Our closest allies in Europe, the UK and Germany, do not wish to see the US disengage from Europe, and ESDI cannot succeed without their support.

Finally, ESDI is criticized as discriminatory toward non-EU members of NATO. Turkey has already voiced its concerns and is treading a fine line between spoiling its chances at EU membership and preserving the influence it currently holds as the southern pillar of NATO. The newest NATO members, the Czech Republic, Hungary, and Poland currently see NATO membership as more important in linking them to the west than their potential membership in the EU in several years. These NATO members do not wish to see the Alliance's influence diluted. An ESDI which discriminates against non-EU members would also alienate the US, which would withdraw its support. If the EU hopes to succeed in developing a robust military capability, it must have access to NATO assets. Before NATO will agree to this, it must have an ironclad guarantee that non-EU members have a voice in how NATO assets will be utilized.

If the US Does Not Support ESDI

What if the US decides against supporting ESDI, will it quietly go the way of the WEU? Perhaps, but probably not. For ESDI to gain full European support, the Rapid Reaction Force will need to demonstrate that it can deploy, operate, and sustain itself for a reasonable period, without American assistance. Although the Headline Goal is for 50-60,000 troops to deploy for one year, a smaller contingent of say, 20,000, for a four-month mission would probably be celebrated as a success in Europe. At present, the European members of NATO do have this capability, as they demonstrated in Kosovo when 40,000 troops were quickly deployed in 1999.

The Rapid Reaction Force is to handle Petersberg tasks, which are on the low end of the spectrum of conflict, so the EU force could most likely handle these missions without NATO's active participation. As long as the Rapid Reaction Force limits itself to humanitarian and peacekeeping missions in the vicinity of Western Europe, it has a good chance of success. If, however, the force were utilized for a higher intensity mission farther afield, such as peace enforcing in the Caucasus or the Middle East, it would be hard pressed to sustain itself, especially if contributing nations already had sizeable forces in the Balkans.

Although our European allies are not asking the US for permission to go forward with ESDI, American support of the initiative plays an important role, especially for Britain and Germany. Both countries fear endangering the relationships developed over the last 50 years of defense cooperation. Skeptics of ESDI in the UK point out that theirs is only country that has access to certain intelligence information collected by the US, information which might be withheld to preclude its dissemination to other members of an EU force.⁴ The UK has traditionally been opposed to European defense cooperation, and it was only in 1998 that Prime Minister Blair changed his government's position. Germany, one of the key players in the EU, supports ESDI, though not as ardently as France. Germany's current focus is on its domestic economic and unemployment problems. At Nice, Germany demonstrated its unwillingness to side with France against the US and the UK over the development of ESDI. Without US backing, support for ESDI in Germany and Britain will erode, leaving France in its familiar position as the lone proponent of a vigorous ESDI.

Although US support is important, there are a number of reasons Europe may decide to pursue ESDI despite US opposition. The first is that ESDI is a step toward independence from NATO and by extension, the US. Since decision-making in NATO is based on consensus,

combined European military decisions are subject to an American or Turkish veto. This was not an issue during the Cold War, when there was a common threat, but it does not sit well anymore. Economics also plays a role. Many Europeans see an EU military capability as a natural outgrowth of the EMU. Recent decisions in Europe to acquire European-built weapon systems over American competitors have highlighted the economic aspect of ESDI. The Eurofighter began flying prototypes in 1999, and in 2000, several European nations committed to buy a new tactical airlifter to be developed by Airbus over the existing Lockheed C-130J. A major factor in the decision to purchase the Airbus aircraft, which must be developed from scratch, was the number of jobs it will create in Europe. US restrictions on technology exports also convinced the British government to purchase the European Meteor air-to-air missile over the US equivalent built by Raytheon.⁵ ESDI is not only about defense, it is also about sovereignty and economics. Even if the US does not embrace ESDI, these factors could motivate Europe to pursue it over US objections.

What Lies Ahead?

Further development of ESDI is stalled on the issue of whether or not the EU will have a complete planning staff, independent of NATO, or a small planning cell that would expand during contingencies, utilizing NATO's planning resources and expertise. France insists on the former, while the US and UK demand NATO and EU planning be linked to ensure transparency. Despite the wording of every European treaty since Maastricht, which state that ESDI is to be developed within the context of NATO, France has pushed to clearly separate the EU from NATO. France's intransigence threatens to undermine support for ESDI in other European capitals, which do not want and cannot afford to duplicate defense resources for an EU-only structure. France will eventually accept a formalized linkage between NATO and the EU before

it allows ESDI to fail. The next European Summit in the summer of 2001 will attempt to resolve this key issue, but if Paris does not change its stance, ESDI risks losing the momentum it has gained since the pledging conference for the Rapid Reaction Force in November, 2000.

In the meantime, the EU has attempted to allay fears that the Rapid Reaction Force will supplant NATO by nominating Finnish General Gustav Hagglund to be the EU's senior military adviser.⁶ The selection of a Finn to head the RRF is significant because it underscores the EU's desire to differentiate the role of the Rapid Reaction Force from that of NATO. General Hagglund's UN peacekeeping experience in Lebanon and Africa makes him suited to lead missions of the Petersberg variety, but he has no NATO experience. Another widely discussed possibility for the post had been NATO's Deputy Supreme Allied Commander Europe, a position which alternates between German and British generals. By selecting a commander from a neutral nation, the EU hopes to focus attention on the RRF's crisis management role.

American skepticism aside, ESDI faces many obstacles within Europe. Foremost among them is the unwillingness to spend more on defense. Rectifying the shortfalls identified in the European arsenal during the Kosovo Conflict (airlift, aerial refuelers, precision munitions, and intelligence gathering) will require significantly higher defense outlays than are currently projected in Europe. At this time, however, there is hardly any public support for increased defense spending in Europe.⁷ French Defense Minister Richard explains "the present unsatisfactory state of defense budgets within NATO partially reflects a state of complacency deriving from US protection," adding that European defense ministers believe they will be better supported by their parliaments "if they can present their budget requests as a contribution to the construction of Europe."⁸ Whether or not his prediction pans out remains to be seen, but European defense budgets have not substantially changed in the last several years. The sharp

decline in defense spending by all NATO allies since 1990 has leveled out, but significant increases are also not on the horizon. For 1999, the average increase in defense spending by NATO countries, not including the US, was a scant 0.6%.⁹ Sydney Rapson, British Member of Parliament, admonished his European colleagues at a WEU Assembly saying, “If we want to get off our knees and stand alongside the Americans on equal terms in defending Europe and on other issues, we must have a capability that is equal to and compatible with that of the Americans. We must not always be reliant on NATO. That will be a sacrifice. It is going to cost.”¹⁰ Unless the Europeans take Rapson’s warning to heart, ESDI will fail to live up to EU’s expectations.

Political infighting could also hamper the development of a coherent ESDI. Europe remains a collection of sovereign nations, with similar, but not identical interests, as evidenced in Figure 1. Not all the countries are willing to subsume their sovereignty to the same degree. The EU is renowned for its Byzantine policy-making procedures, in which attempts to resolve difficult issues often result in a decision not to decide. Differing commitments to NATO among EU nations could hamper the development of an independent European force. The United Kingdom, and to a lesser degree, Germany, are unwilling to endanger the “special relationships” they enjoy with the United States. Europe is by no means unified—Britain, Denmark, and Norway, although eligible to participate in the European Monetary Union, have opted out. Finally, opposition among NATO members could hamper the development of ESDI. The Rapid Reaction Force will be dependent on NATO assets, especially in its early stages. Turkey has already shown its willingness to break with the rest of the Alliance by blocking measures granting the EU blanket access to NATO assets. Tensions within Europe, if not successfully resolved, have the potential to derail ESDI before it gets off the ground.

Despite the many obstacles to ESDI, the initiative does have reasonably good prospects for success in the long term. One of the primary positive factors in the continuing development of ESDI was the selection of Javier Solana as the EU's High Representative for Common Foreign and Security Policy. Solana's experience as Secretary-General of NATO from 1995-1999 serves to bridge the gap between the EU and NATO.¹¹ Solana's behind-the-scenes leadership during the Kosovo Crisis is credited with holding the Alliance together during the air campaign. He also currently serves as the Secretary-General of the WEU, so he is in a unique position to pull resources together from all existing defense structures in Europe. Another factor in favor of ESDI are the military agreements already in effect in Europe. Some nations have signed memorandums of understanding (MOU) outside the framework of NATO, the WEU, or the EU. According to a French-German MOU, for example, airlift missions can be requested in return for reciprocal airlift at a later date. This led to a formal proposal in 2000 for a combined European Airlift Command modeled on the existing NATO AWACS squadron in Geilenkirchen.¹² European nations have a history of working together when it is perceived to be mutually beneficial. Lastly, the catalog of forces pledged to the Rapid Reaction Force bodes well for the continued evolution of ESDI. Although the details of the force itself have yet to be resolved, the fact that every European nation was willing to participate shows the degree of support behind ESDI. Europe is becoming more united, a trend that every European will personally experience next January when national currencies are replaced by the Euro. Many believe it is inevitable that the EU acquires an autonomous military capability to match its economic and political instruments of power.

Notes

¹ Peter van Ham, *Europe's New Defense Ambitions: Implications for NATO, the US, and Russia*, The Marshall Center Papers, No. 1 (Garmisch-Partenkirchen, Germany: George C. Marshall European Center For Security Studies, 2000), vii.

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⁸ Alain Richard, French Minister of Defense, address to the Center for German and European Studies, Washington, D.C., 23 February 2000.

⁹ Department of Defense, *Allied Contributions to the Common Defense: A Report to the United States Congress by the Secretary of Defense, March 2000* (Washington, D.C.), Table E-4, available from http://www.defenselink.mil/pubs/allied_contrib2000/E-4.html.

¹⁰ Document A/WEU (46) CR 8, "Forty-sixth Session (Second Part): Official Report of the Eighth Sitting," *Assembly of WEU*, 4 December 2000, 28; on-line, Internet, 9 December 2000, available from <http://assembly.weu.int/eng/sessions/46/sitting08.html>.

¹¹ "Curriculum vitae de M. Javier SOLANA MADRIAGA," *Europa*, 1; on-line, Internet, 21 January 2001, available from <http://ue.eu.int.solana/CV/CVEN.htm>.

¹² Notes, European Tactical Airlift Symposium, 29 June 2000.

Chapter 6

Conclusions

The problem is not too much America in NATO, but too little Europe.

—Rudolph Scharping, German Minister of Defense

The US should continue to encourage development of ESDI within the context of NATO. Foremost consideration must be given to the role of “dual-hatted” forces, those assets which will be allocated for use by both NATO and the EU. To preclude conflicting tasking of these forces, it is imperative that planning for NATO and the EU be completely transparent to each other. France continues to press for an independent planning capability, but it is isolated on the issue and is not having any success convincing its EU neighbors to support the measure. Because any EU force will be heavily reliant on NATO, the Alliance has considerable leverage in shaping the evolution of ESDI.

The harshest criticism for ESDI in the US has been that it is a destabilizing influence on Europe. Senator Helms believes the “true motivation behind ESDI” may be “a means for Europe to check American power and influence within NATO.”¹ The Americans ask why are the Europeans willing to risk undermining the most effective alliance in history? The EU answer is that the risk of undermining NATO is smaller than the risk of maintaining the *status quo*.² The lessons of Yugoslavia have convinced the Europeans that NATO does not guarantee stability outside Western Europe. America’s reluctance to become militarily involved in the Balkans precluded NATO from acting to intervene. From a European perspective, ESDI will not

destabilize Europe, on the contrary, it is designed to enhance stability by providing a military option in addition to NATO.

The US should avoid overreacting to an evolving ESDI. First, the EU will be unable to act independently in a crisis for a very long time. US participation and support will continue to be a requirement for at least 10-15 years. The US can leverage its technological strengths in the areas of stealth, precision weapons, and intelligence, as well as its mobility, aerial refueling, and reconnaissance capabilities to maintain its leadership role in Europe. The disparity between European and American military capability is so large that it cannot be overcome in the near term. For this reason, the US has nothing to fear from ESDI at the present. By not supporting European efforts to improve their military posture, the US risks unnecessarily damaging the already strained Trans-Atlantic relationship, losing an opportunity to shape the development of ESDI in a favorable manner.

Furthermore, there are very few crises envisioned where the EU would want to act and the US would not.³ As industrial, western democracies with global economies, the EU's and the US's broad economic and political interests are quite similar. Moreover, where US and EU interests diverge, there is often at least as much disagreement *within* the EU as between the US and the EU. The EU, as a political union of 15 sovereign nations, has never had an easy time reaching consensus. The highly political nature of the EU requires important decisions be acceptable to all members. For this reason, there is little to suggest the EU will pose a direct challenge to the US. Although rapid progress has been made since 1998, capped by the establishment of the Rapid Reaction Force in late 2000, the EU has the easy part behind it. Assigning 100,000 troops to the force, out of 2,000,000 in Europe, was not nearly as challenging as what the future holds. Continued development of ESDI will be incremental and plagued by the issues of

national sovereignty, foreign command of national forces, the relationships between EU and non-EU countries, and most importantly, defense budgets.

The concept of a common security policy for Europe is not a new idea. The first attempts at creating a unified Europe occurred shortly after the end of World War II. In the half century since then, Europe has grown closer economically and politically. The EU, as a conduit for conducting European policy, has steadily grown in importance. With the successful introduction of the Euro, the EU has shifted its focus to acquiring a military instrument of power to complement the EU's political and economic instruments. The Balkan wars, combined with a new British commitment to ESDI, provided the impetus to go forward with developing a robust military capability. This was especially true after the Kosovo crisis, where the disparity between American and European military forces became evident. American political decisions in the last two years have also helped fuel a desire in Europe to develop an autonomous military capability.

ESDI in its current form poses little threat to NATO or the US. Most EU members value their association with the US and do not want to jeopardize the relationships which have been cultivated since World War II. The US has been telling Europe for years that it must improve its military capabilities. Maintaining the *status quo* in Europe is not a viable option. Europe recognizes that it needs to be able to act on its own behalf without support from the US. ESDI is the vehicle to achieve that end.

Notes

¹ Senator Jesse Helms, Chairman, US Senate Committee on Foreign Relations and Senator Gordon Smith, Chairman, Sub-committee on European Affairs, "European Defense Policy is Dangerous," *London Daily Telegraph*, 28 December 2000.

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